

FINDS SWEDEN NEARLY BACK TO NORMAL LIFE

Axel E. Nord Observes Remarkable Progress in Scandinavian Country; Prices on Downward Trend

Four months of travel in England and the Scandinavian countries, and association with tourists and American business men who have visited the Continental countries, has afforded Axel E. Nord, of Wilmette, a peculiarly clear insight into present day conditions on the other side of the Atlantic.

Mr. Nord, who is a member of the firm of Schultz and Nord, tailors at 1152 Central avenue, returned to Wilmette on Monday, September 6, after a prolonged sojourn in Europe, spent in travel, and in visiting his parents in Sweden. Mrs. Nord and the children are remaining in Sweden for several months.

The Nord family left Wilmette on May 13. They traveled in England for 10 days and then proceeded to the Scandinavian countries.

Touching upon general conditions in Sweden Mr. Nord said in part:

Living Conditions Good

"Living conditions in the Scandinavian countries are exceptionally good. In Sweden, particularly, one finds conditions more nearly normal than, perhaps, in any other European country, since the government has come under control of the socialist group (socialist in this sense implying merely the liberal element, bearing no resemblance to and having no affiliation with the so-called socialist or radical element in America).

"Government ownership of public utilities has proved entirely successful in Sweden. Conditions of travel are excellent. Because of shortage of fuel the government has limited train schedules to only essential "runs", without seriously interfering with the convenience of the public. Oil and electricity are gradually taking the place of coal as the motive power on the railways, thus insuring economy of operation. The telephone service throughout the country is ideal and the street railway systems in the larger towns and cities are an example of efficiency. There is no overloading of cars, no strap-hanging. There is a seat for every passenger. Special cars are stationed at intervals along the right of way to accommodate extra heavy traffic. The fares are equivalent to three and one half cents in American money.

"The housing situation offers an acute problem in Sweden as well as elsewhere. Rents are very high because of the serious curtailment of building operations during the war when labor was directed toward the exclusive manufacture of war materials and ammunition. Newspapers in the larger cities contain many advertisements offering large sums for transfer of house leases. Prospective brides and groom are postponing marriage because of the serious shortage of living quarters. With the gradual return of normal business, manufacturing and commercial conditions, however, the remedy for the present situation is in sight and the people are patiently awaiting the early re-establishment of the old prosperity.

Prices Going Down

"Prices of food and other commodities are on the decline and in many instances have fallen to the halfway mark from the summit attained during and shortly following the war. American coal may be obtained in plentiful quantities and at a comparatively reasonable figure. Clothing prices have not fallen apace with other commodities. A bumper crop is materially reducing the cost of foodstuffs.

"There is very apparent prosperity throughout Sweden. There is a minimum of labor trouble and the wave of Bolshevism is most certainly on the wane. Thousands of students and working people who had become firm adherents of the Soviet doctrines have, within recent months, forsaken the new theories and returned to normal thinking and activity. So-called Bolshevik clubs are gradually passing out of existence. The Swedish government has been very lenient with the radical element and, while maintaining a constant and scrutinizing surveillance, has refrained discreetly from interfering with employment of arbitrary measures the liberal government has waged a successful battle against Bolshevism through enactment of sane, progressive and just laws designed for the express benefit of the working classes. Working conditions are good and the workingman seems quite contented.

No Prohibition

"Prohibition is unknown in Sweden, but regulation of the liquor trade, affecting the dealer on the one and the consumer on the other hand, has proved effective and satisfactory. Drinkers are registered and liquor is sold in prescribed wholesale quantities only. There are no saloons. Cafes may sell only light wines, punch and beer. Liquor may

be purchased for use in the homes only. Drunkenness is practically unknown. "Preservation of the forests is prominent among the chief interests of the government. Mature trees only may be cut and in each instance the tree taken away must be supplanted by a hardy sapling. Sweden, for that reason, boasts a wealth of beautiful forests.

"Yet with all these indications of progress and advancement there remains one feature of the government which must undergo radical change before Sweden may be counted among the really liberal countries of the world. The working classes of Sweden are overburdened with taxes while the more fortunate per-

sons of means have, by reason of antiquated laws, largely escaped paying tribute into government coffers. There is a heavy tax on wages. Incomes are exempt. Taxes have been placed on war profits, but the persons with large incomes have assisted but little in providing funds to defray the expense of conducting the government. The people have promise, however, with the liberal administration in power, of early relief from the heavy tax burdens. Equitable taxation will soon be apace with the progress in other directions."

ATTENTION EVERYBODY
Look out for the Mollycoddle. Watch for it next week. —Adv. T27-1tc

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Rev. and Mrs. James Austin Richards and children returned from Bridgton, Maine, on Thursday of this week.

Mrs. Frederick Dickinson and children, Dorothy and Leon, have re-

turned from their vacation at Charlevoix, Mich.

DON'T FAIL TO WATCH
FOR THE MOLLYCODDLE. COMING SOON.
—Adv. T27-1tc

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